

**Board of Finance
Regular Meeting
March 4, 2014**

Present: David Richardson, Wayne Durst, George McCoy, Glen Lessig, Ronald Cabana, Mark Shamber, Michael Dougherty, David Hosmer, Fred Chmura.

Guests: Treasurer Donna Stefanik, Clerk Christine French, members of the Board of Education, and approximately 25 members of the public.

1. Call to Order: Chairman David Hosmer called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

2. Approval of Minutes from February 11, 2014 Meeting: George McCoy, seconded by David Richardson, moved to accept the minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Board of Education Budget Presentation: Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Frank Baran, explained to the Board of Finance and the audience that the Board of Education budget for the Fiscal year 2014/2015 is \$17,486,890.00. This is an increase of \$1,442,915.00 or 8.99% from last fiscal year's budget.

Dr. Baran explained that there were significant increases in Special Education, health insurance, Woodstock Academy tuition, salaries, building maintenance, and fuel and electricity costs. He further stated that there has been no new positions, programs, or enhanced supplies in this year's budget.

David Richardson and Wayne Durst questioned the increase of \$470,540.00 in the Special Education line item. Dr. Baran, as well as Trish Lustilla, Special Education coordinator, explained that there will not be a decrease of students in Special Education. They also explained that the costs of outsourcing services and in transportation costs have risen.

David Richardson also questioned why buses were replaced at 150,000 miles instead of at 300,000 miles that is the typical life span of school buses. Dr. Baran replied that safety of the students outweighed the costs of replacing the buses at a lower mileage point.

David Hosmer also felt that there could be a cost savings if the computer coordinator was put back into the classroom, and a separate computer coordinator hired.

Chairman Hosmer concluded the discussion on the Board of Education budget by reminding the audience that this will be a very difficult budget year, and a lot of hard decisions will have to be made before the budget for the Fiscal Year 2014/2015 is presented to the voters of the Town of Woodstock.

4. Old Business: None.

5. Correspondence and Announcements: None.

6. Citizens Comments: Michael Bernardi, chairman of the Board of Education, wanted to emphasize that hard decisions had already gone into the budget process. He also explained that the maintenance of the schools' water system is at a critical stage. If the system breaks down school will need to be cancelled until the repairs can go out to bid, and repairs made. This is something that can no longer be delayed.

Many of the audience urged the Board of Finance to take the Board of Education budget as presented directly to the voters and let the voters decide whether the budget is too high. David Hosmer reminded the audience that the Town of Woodstock must follow the Proposition 46 Ordinance, which will probably dictate that cuts to the budget must be made before it can be brought before the voters.

Adjournment: George McCoy, seconded by Mark Shamber, motioned to adjourn at 8:15pm. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted:

Christine G. French